

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 044068
ORIGIN AF-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 AID-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00 IGA-02 HA-05 /085 R

DRAFTED BY AF/W:MCEATON/CBQ

APPROVED BY AF:RMMOOSE

-----099631 190930Z /23

R 190022Z FEB 78

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

S E C R E T STATE 044068

E.O. 11652:XGDS-1

TAGS: PINT, UV

SUBJECT: UPPER VOLTAN AMBASSADOR'S CALL ON ASSISTANT
SECRETARY MOOSE, FEBRUARY 14, 1978

REFS: A)77 OUAGADOUGOU 4756; B)77 USUN 4998

1. IN HIS FIRST CALL ON ASSISTANT SECRETARY MOOSE
FEBRUARY 14, AMBASSADOR YAGUIBOU RAISED SUBJECTS OF
FOOD SITUATION IN UPPER VOLTA, RECENT POLITICAL
DEVELOPMENTS, AND ASKED FOR U.S. MATERIAL SUPPORT FOR
UPPER VOLTA'S RETURN TO CIVILIAN RULE. FOOD SITUATION
IS TREATED IN SEPTEL.

2. THE AMBASSADOR BEGAN BY TAKING NOTE OF THE CARTER
ADMINISTRATION'S STRONG STAND ON HUMAN RIGHTS, AND
SAID HIS GOVERNMENT WAS PLEASED THAT UPPER VOLTA'S
GOOD HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD HAD RECEIVED SUCH FAIR AND
HONEST TREATMENT IN THE RECENT COUNTRY HUMAN RIGHTS

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 044068

REPORTS SUBMITTED TO CONGRESS. HE LATER NOTED THAT
THERE SHOULD BE A SYSTEM FOR REWARDING THOSE COUNTRIES
WITH GOOD HUMAN RIGHTS RECORDS, JUST AS THERE WERE
MEASURES FOR "PUNISHING" HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATORS.

3. YAGUIBOU NOTED THAT UPPER VOLTA WAS PRESENTLY WELL

DOWN THE ROAD LEADING TO CIVILIAN RULE. THE EFFORT HAD BEEN SUCCESSFUL SO FAR, BECAUSE OF ONE MAN, PRESIDENT LAMIZANA, AND YAGUIBOU SAID MANY UPPER VOLTANS WERE HOPING THAT HE WOULD RUN FOR PRESIDENT IN THE APPROACHING MAY ELECTIONS. THERE WERE MANY ENCOURAGING DEVELOPMENTS. IN ADDITION TO HAVING BEEN FORMALLY ENDORSED BY THE PRA PARTY, YAGUIBOU SAID THAT FOUR ADDITIONAL PARTIES HAD DECIDED TO SUPPORT LAMIZANA IF HE SHOULD DECIDE TO RUN: UNI, IPRA, GAP, AND PRN. THE AMBASSADOR SAID THAT HE HAD RECENTLY BEEN TOLD BY PRESIDENT LAMIZANA ON THE PHONE THAT "IF THE PEOPLE NEED ME, I WILL AGREE TO RUN."

4. MOOSE SAID IT WOULD APPEAR THAT PRESIDENT LAMIZANA WAS IN A GOOD POSITION FOR REELECTION AND ASKED IF THERE WERE ANY POSSIBLE OPPONENTS. YAGUIBOU REPLIED THAT ONLY FORMER MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS DR. JOSEPH CONOMBO WAS BEING SPOKEN OF IN GOVERNMENT CIRCLES AS A POSSIBLE CANDIDATE. AT THIS TIME, HOWEVER, YAGUIBOU SAID LAMIZANA WAS IN AN EXCELLENT POSITION. THE AMBASSADOR SAID THAT HE WAS, OF COURSE, HIGHLY SUSPICIOUS OF LEFTIST PARTIES SUCH AS THE MLN (UPV) AND PAI (SIC) WHICH MIGHT RELY ON "OUTSIDE INTERVENTION" IN THE ELECTIONS.

5. AMBASSADOR YAGUIBOU SAID THAT THE CHIEF PURPOSE
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 044068

OF HIS VISIT HAD BEEN TO BRING THE FOREGOING TO THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY'S ATTENTION. HE THEN MENTIONED AN EARLIER CONVERSATION BETWEEN AMBASSADOR GRAHAM AND FONMIN KARGOUGOU REGARDING MATERIAL ASSISTANCE THE U.S. GOVERNMENT OR OTHER U.S. INSTITUTION MIGHT BE ABLE TO PROVIDE IN THE UPCOMING ELECTIONS (REF A). HE NOTED THAT UPPER VOLTA PERMREP MENSAH HAD ALSO RAISED THE SAME SUBJECT WITH AMBASSADOR YOUNG IN NEW YORK (REF B). IN BOTH CASES, THE U.S. REPLY HAD BEEN NEGATIVE AND YAGUIBOU SAID THAT PRESIDENT LAMIZANA WAS DISTURBED BY THIS ATTITUDE. YAGUIBOU SAID THAT HE HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED TO REQUEST THAT THE U.S. POSITION BE REVIEWED BEFORE THE END OF MARCH. HE ADDED THAT IT WAS THE DESIRE OF THE UPPER VOLTAN PEOPLE TO KEEP LAMIZANA IN POWER.

6. MOOSE BEGAN HIS REPLY BY NOTING THAT PRESIDENT LAMIZANA WAS HIGHLY REGARDED BOTH FOR HIS EFFORTS TO RETURN UPPER VOLTA TO CIVILIAN RULE AND THE EXCELLENT HUMAN RIGHTS RECORD HE HAD PRESERVED IN THE COUNTRY. PRECISELY BECAUSE OF THE STRONG

U.S. CONCERN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, IT WAS NOT APPROPRIATE FOR THE U.S. TO PLAY A ROLE IN THE ELECTIONS OF A FOREIGN GOVERNMENT IN ORDER TO INJECT U.S. VIEWS IN AN INTERNAL POLITICAL SITUATION. MOOSE NOTED THAT THE U.S. HAD BEEN SEVERELY CRITICIZED FOR SUCH ACTIONS IN THE PAST, AND HE BELIEVED THAT MATERIAL SUPPORT WOULD NOT BE CONSISTENT WITH U.S. BELIEF IN THE RIGHT OF FOREIGN COUNTRIES TO ELECT THEIR OWN LEADERS.

7. ON THE OTHER HAND, MOOSE SAID THAT PRESIDENT LAMIZANA'S RECORD SPOKE WELL ENOUGH FOR ITSELF, AND THAT THE U.S. WOULD LOOK FOR OPPORTUNITIES OVER THE NEW FEW MONTHS TO EXPRESS ITS PUBLIC APPROVAL OF PRESIDENT LAMIZANA'S CONDUCT IN LEADING UPPER VOLTA.
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 04 STATE 044068

8. AMBASSADOR YAGUIBOU SAID THAT HE WAS NOT SURPRIZED AT THESE REMARKS, HOWEVER, HE WISHED TO EXPLAIN THAT SUCH U.S. MATERIAL SUPPORT WAS NOT MEANT TO SUPPORT ONE CANDIDATE AT THE EXPENSE OF ANOTHER. UPPER VOLTA WAS A POOR COUNTRY AND THE CAMPAIGNS OF EIGHT PARTIES WOULD SERIOUSLY STRAIN THE NATIONAL BUDGET. SUCH FUNDS WOULD BE USED TO SUPPORT THE CONSIDERABLE EXPENSE OF PHYSICALLY ORGANIZING THE ELECTION: BALLOT BOXES, ELECTION MONITORS, "HOURS" OF TELEVISION TIME FOR ALL CANDIDATES, AND THE COST OF SETTING UP A NEW NATIONAL ASSEMBLY. YAGUIGOU OFFERED TO PRESENT A DETAILED ESTIMATE OF THESE COSTS, IF THE US DESIRED.

9. MOOSE REPLIED THAT WHILE THE AMBASSADOR'S CLARIFICATION WAS A NEW ELEMENT IN THE QUESTION, HE BELIEVED THAT IT WAS STILL UNLIKELY THAT U.S. POSITION WOULD CHANGE. HOWEVER, MOOSE INFORMED YAGUIBOU THAT HE WOULD REVIEW THE MATTER AGAIN AND DISCUSS IT FURTHER WITH HIM AT A LATER DATE.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: AMBASSADORS, MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 19 feb 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE044068
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: MCEATON/CBQ
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780077-0311
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780235/aaaabdvv.tel
Line Count: 158
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: f81661d3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN AF
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 OUAGADOUGOU 4756, 77 USUN NEW YORK 4998
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3543432
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: UPPER VOLTAN AMBASSADORI'S CALL ON ASSISTANT SECRETARY MOOSE, FEBRUARY 14, 1978
TAGS: PINT, UV, (MOOSE, RICHARD M), (YAGUIBOU)
To: OUAGADOUGOU
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/f81661d3-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014